

**Workforce Development Planning Regions**  
**Local Elected Officials and Workforce Boards Review Process**  
**November 16, 2015**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires the Governor to identify planning regions within the state. The purpose of identifying regions is to align workforce development activities and resources with larger economic development areas and available resources to provide coordinated and efficient services to both job seekers and employers.

A planning region map was developed based on the factors described below that creates five planning regions—identified as Central, Eastern, Northwestern, Southern, and Western. If all local areas within a defined planning region are in agreement about these boundaries, they are encouraged to move forward with regional planning processes outlined in the law and the Notice of Proposed Rule Making and no action is required.

If a local area believes that a different configuration of planning regions will best support employers and jobseekers in their community, alternatives may be submitted for the Governor's consideration.

**By December 21, 2015**, a letter must be submitted to the CWDC signed by all local elected officials for a local workforce development area(s) and the chair of the local workforce development board(s) indicating the planning region that the local area(s) would like to be a part of or that a local area would like to function as its own planning region.

Consensus must be received from all local areas, as indicated by the local elected officials and workforce boards, within a newly proposed planning region in order for that region to be recommended to the Governor for approval. Additionally, an opportunity must be provided to all local areas or sub-areas affected by proposed changes to the five existing planning regions to discuss the implications of those changes and voice their agreement or disagreement.

All submissions to the CWDC must indicate how the opportunity for discussion was provided and how the proposed planning region meets the designation criteria below.

Final approval of the planning region map by the Governor will be done in conjunction with submission of the Combined State Plan. **From January 4<sup>th</sup> to January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016**, the CWDC will review the proposed planning region map through an online work session and vote to recommend a map to the Governor for final approval.

**On January 8<sup>th</sup>** the Combined State Plan with the recommended planning region map will be posted for public comment. Planning regions are encouraged to move forward with planning processes based on that map.

The final planning region map will be in effect for at least two years and a similar process will be followed every two years as a part of state plan modifications or new state plan submissions.

### **Designation Criteria**

Regions must consist of either

- A. One local area;
- B. Two or more local areas that are aligned with the region; or
- C. Interstate areas contained within two or more states and consist of labor market areas, economic development areas, or other appropriate contiguous subareas of those states.

The Governor must assign local areas to a region prior to submission of the State Unified or Combined Plan, in order for the State to receive WIOA title I-B adult, dislocated worker, and youth allotments.

The planning regions should be designed in consideration of the extent to which the local areas in a proposed region:

- Share a single labor market;
- Share a common economic development area; and
- Possess the Federal and non-Federal resources, including appropriate education and training institutions, to administer activities under WIOA subtitle B.

WIOA allows the Governor to take other criteria into consideration to inform the design of planning regions, and in Colorado an emphasis has been placed on the existence of partnerships across local areas as well as

- Commuting patterns
- Industrial composition
- Location quotients
- Labor force conditions
- Geographic boundaries

This notice is being distributed to all county commissioners by Colorado Counties, Inc. and to all workforce directors and staff by the Colorado Workforce Development Council. Any questions may be directed to Brandy DeLange at [bdelange@ccionline.org](mailto:bdelange@ccionline.org) or Lee Wheeler-Berliner at [lee.wheeler-berliner@state.co.us](mailto:lee.wheeler-berliner@state.co.us). Letters requesting changes to the planning region map may be submitted electronically to [cwdc@state.co.us](mailto:cwdc@state.co.us).